

Masthead Logo

Archives Alive

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As Ever, Harry

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Jim Eaton to Evelyn Birkby, April 1st 1943

Rhetorical analysis:

In Jim Eaton's letter to Evelyn, he divides the letter into seemingly two parts. In the first, Jim informs her of his discontent in not having heard from her in some time as well as some general updates about his life at school to start up communications with her again. Throughout the letter, he makes assumptions, witty jokes or remarks, and uses straightforward speech to get his point across. In his very first sentence after saying dear Evelyn, he says "Maybe it should be dear miss Corrie." Starting the letter off this way shows Jim's straightforwardness because he got right to the point - he wants her to write him. Also, he chose to use an almost witty joke to point out how she hasn't written to him in quite a while without simply accusing her.

He continues to say "If the other members of Grace Church are as neglected as you have neglected me, then it is true we had a change." The purpose of this sentence possibly could have been to make Evelyn feel guilty to make her more inclined to write to Jim. The phrase "we had a change," shows that they have written to each other previously and that it's only recently that they stopped. In the next few sentences, Jim says he understands that she has a busy schedule and that he would like her to take some time to write him - more straightforwardness. He makes a few jokes about a man by the name of "Stickeman" being a part of the Sunday School (or not), possibly in an attempt to lighten the mood of the letter.

At this point in the letter, Jim says "Now that I have a good start for an argument I shall write a letter." This is the start of the second part of the letter, which is most likely all he would have included in

the letter had he and Evelyn been writing regularly. He begins by talking about how his application to the “U of Life was acceptably received” and how the sunset behind the mountains is the most beautiful thing he has ever seen. Later, he talks about a church in Denver, the “Trinity Methodist Church” and compares it to the Grace Church that he and Evelyn know personally. Afterwards, he talks about a man who was drafted at the same named Bill and how he and his wife may have an apartment available for him. Jim ends the letter asking Evelyn to keep up on the “U of Life” for him and apologizing for the type of paper he wrote on.

Historical analysis:

In the second page of the letter, Jim Eaton mentions that he attended a church in Denver called the [“Trinity Methodist Church.”](#) After some research, I found that the church was founded after settlers from Kansas arrived in 1858 looking for gold before Denver was founded. "It didn't take long to learn that the tall tales were true, by July the brothers had found the first traces of gold. Word spread like wildfire throughout the country and within five months 100 more hopefuls had arrived." Later, "General William Larimer", named the land "Denver City after James Denver, Governor of the Kansas Territory." One of the settlers, who was a Methodist preacher, "was asked to hold religious services." In 1859, two men by the names of William H. Goode and Jacob Adriance started to establish churches in the Pikes Peak region and when they reached "Denver City," they established the "Denver City Methodist Episcopal Mission, known today as Trinity United Methodist Church." Since then, the Church went through some rough times and by 1886, was in 175,000 dollars in debt. A man by the name of Henry Butchel then became the minister and in just over 2 years helped to raise all of the 175,000, saving the church.

The letter was dated April 1st 1943. Less than a week prior, on March 26th, the battle of the Komandorski Islands began. This battle was started when the United States found out that the Japanese were going to send a convoy of supplies to their troops in Alaska. In an effort to stop them before they could arrive, Admiral Charles McMorris commanded several Navy ships including 1 heavy cruiser, 1 light cruiser and 4 destroyers to intercept the convoy. The Admiral didn't know that the Japanese also had a number of warships and "one of the last pure gunnery duels between fleets" ensued. The American ships were taking heavy damage and escaped only because the Japanese commander, Boshiro Hosogaya decided to pull his ships from the battle before they could destroy the American ships. In the end, both fleets suffered heavy damage, but the Americans did stop the Japanese from sending supplies via surface ships; they later used only submarines for their convoys.

Written By: Justin Elem

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